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IS RELIEF HERE TO STAY? *By Philip Klein*

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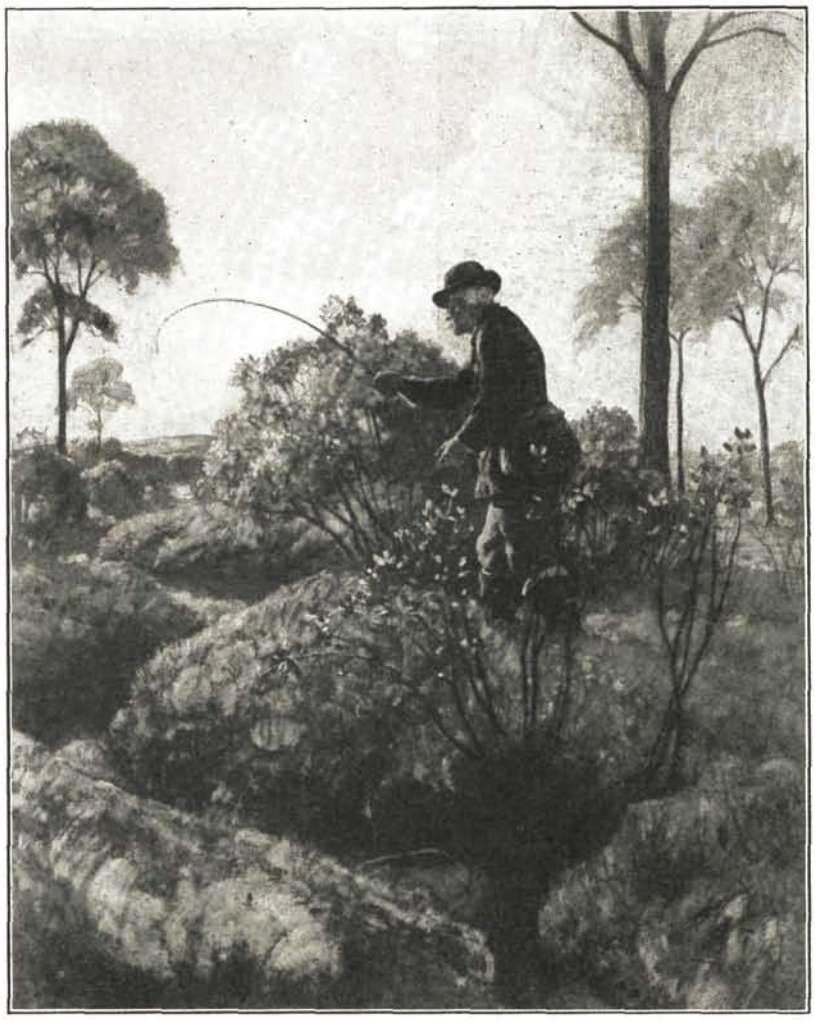

TROUT FISHING
From a painting by N. C. Wyeth for "Trending into Maine"

"The seeming degeneration of the human race, its dependence, its effeminacy—this is the fox in Mr. Roberts's bosom. He sees in Maine the last stronghold of the individualist." . . . *(See page 10)*

KENNETH ROBERTS *By Ben Ames Williams*

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The First BIG NOVEL of the Summer

CONCORD IN JEOPARDY

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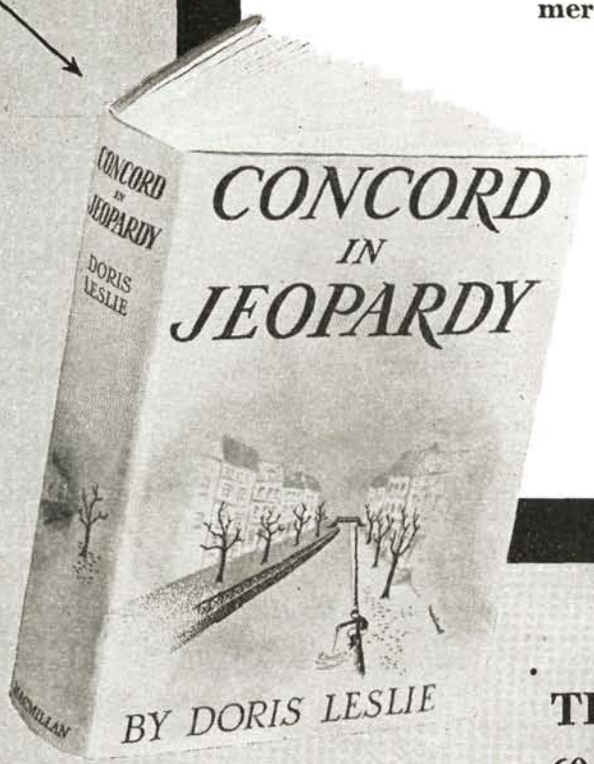

IN this story of Alexander Concord, artist, and the three women who influenced his artistic and material life, Mrs. Leslie combines the engrossing factors of her previous works and adds others. It is being compared to May Sinclair's "Divine Fire."

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Is Relief Here to Stay?

BY PHILIP KLEIN

FERA photo

"Public employment . . . to fill the gap between real employment and relief" . . . (FERA transients clearing ground at Gallup, N. M.)

The sound of tramping feet in a long hall, the noise of scuffling feet in a big room, the babble of human voices pitched in every key, mingle with other sounds in a ceaseless jazz symphony of human life. A baby cries, a woman's shrill complaints rise above the general theme, the quavering tones of an aged voice become distinct in a sudden lull, to be drowned by the gruff voices of men. Crisp sentences in the brisk tones of busy people cut through at times and are lost again in the surge of angry voices, pleading voices, gentle voices, harsh voices, good-natured voices with jests that ripple the flood of sound into momentary waves of laughter. The click of many typewriters keeps up a steady accompaniment, punctuated by the faint "ting" of their little warning bells, and at longer intervals by the sharp ring of the telephone. And weaving together this welter of sound, the tramp, tramp, tramp of feet is a never-ending thud, thud, thud, like the throbbing of muffled drums.*

THIS is the overture in vivid orchestration of a scene full of contrasts, full of movement, that continues for several pages and keeps the reader puzzled and in suspense. There seems to be no purpose or end in all the hubbub. The growing cacophony is interrupted after a while by another short paragraph—as if the author feared that the reader might lose patience with this meaningless scene.

Is this Hollywood? Is the scene set for some feature film? Are these the extras made up for character parts? No, gentle readers (if any), this is the Emergency Relief Office in a rural county of some eighteen thousand souls in northern Michigan. I was Administrator of Relief in that county for three years.

As a matter of fact, to millions of people such a scene sounds neither unreal nor incredible; it is part of their own bitter personal experience, a close-up of their individual misfortunes. These are the "relief cases." To another group, also, scenes like this have been familiar. To them, also, it has been part of personal experience: less bitter but in some ways not less painful than to the relief clients themselves. These are the relief workers. They were expected to provide for millions of families, against hunger, illness, lack of shelter, and despondence, in the midst of a chaos. And this chaos was not only a welter of sound, the confusion of a crowded office, not merely high-pressure drive under emergency conditions, but chaos made more chaotic by uncertainty, by suspicion and ill-will, by actual or impending attacks from politics and avarice, and from the distrust of the very clients whom they sought to serve. Mrs. Armstrong's book is far from telling the worst, either when she describes what she experienced or in those overtones which she merely suggests. Speaking for her clients she pleads pathetically that "We Too Are the People." This plea is only superficially one for a particular group of relief recipients. Behind these is an entire community—in this case a rural county in the cut-over forest lands of northern Michigan—on the verge of destitution, a community that has aged before its time like those women prematurely old from bearing too many children, too early in life, under too heavy a burden of toil and destitution; a young country that has burnt itself out by being driven too hard, at too high a pace, without a care or provision for the future.

Mrs. Armstrong does not quite say all this. In some ways she seems to say far too little. One gets the impression that she's a nice person, a friendly, sympathetic, kind person who finds it hard to see or think evil. She's very human; she has preferences but no prejudices; she prefers the typical, healthy things, red cheeks, shiny boots, and Irish accent; and her chief delight is the "leprechaun smile." Her sympathies are not class-driven; she feels at home among the friendly, middle-class people; admires good silver, fine walnut paneling; does not hate the rich nor fawn upon them; her sympathies are keen but not sloppy, and her concern for the poor seems to be motivated by mercy rather than by justice. There seems to be nothing revolutionary in her make-up; evils do not rouse righteous indignation in her; she's not moved to punish or destroy, to discipline or to rectify, but only to help, generously and intelligently.

Her book seems to be a sort of pathetic appeal to those who have power, who might be ruthless and unkind, to recognize, if they would please, that "We Too Are the People." Such an author is not likely to overstate, to paint pictures in harsh colors, to exaggerate and blacken the situation. The first question, therefore, that may naturally arise from reading this vivid and compelling tale of a relief administrator, whether the sad picture is true, is easily answered. Mrs. Armstrong tells, if anything, not the whole truth, or, at least, not the truth at its worst. There are communities, rural and urban, in which there were (and still are) situations more appalling, destitution more sickening, chaos more bewildering, and hopelessness far more lasting.

A number of things of deep significance

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* *WE TOO ARE THE PEOPLE. By Louise V. Armstrong. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1938. $3.*

Next Week

THE MAGAZINE ESSAY
By CHARLES W. FERGUSON

FANNY KEMBLE
By MARGARET ARMSTRONG
Reviewed by John Mason Brown

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may elude the reader because of Mrs. Armstrong's restraint and lack of militancy, though one glimpses them here and there, as for example when she speaks of "the great lumber industry," which, "was born and grew to a roaring, roistering, and not too honest maturity. It did its gaudy, ribald turn in the pageant of national development and passed on out of the picture, leaving a ruined land and a stranded population to fight off poverty as best they could." This is significant, not because it defines the lumber industry in northern Michigan but because it describes hundreds of communities of all kinds all over the land, which, like gold mines, have been stripped and left with only debris, material and human. Quoting an earlier report of her own made to the State Office in August, 1934, the author says: "This county had been suffering from a depression for at least fifteen years prior to the general depression, and when the general depression spread over the country, it was not regarded as serious by most of the citizens here because, up until the past two years at least, times were no worse here than they had been right along." In this respect, also, the significance lies in the typical nature of the statement rather than in its uniqueness. In the industrial city of Pittsburgh, for example, unemployment and poverty had been increasing for a decade or two before the great depression, consistently and with increasing tempo. "About half the families [around Pittsburgh, employed in manufacture] started the depression in a pinch," and, "the pinched conditions must characterize more than half the families of manufacturing wage earners even when business is at normal levels," reports J. P. Watson of the University of Pittsburgh for that industrial area.* This thing, then, had been coming on though barely sensed and not at all admitted, for some years prior to the crash of 1929. We find, then, in this panorama of those who "Too Are the People," the old poor who had always been the wards of the charitable community; the newer poor who had gradually been squeezed into uncertain livelihood by the economic changes wrought in diverse communities by new industrial development, the exhaustion of natural resources, and technological changes; and we have the newest poor, the products of the present depression.

If there's one thing that does not ring true in Mrs. Armstrong's book, it is the impression the reader may get that the episode described is complete in itself, with a beginning and an end and a total duration of some three years. That is the length of time during which the author served as relief administrator. This book is the expression of a personal experience and those three years are sharply in focus. This serves to make the story real and vivid; it may, however, also obscure some essentials in the setting of her story and this setting is the more important in that it is true not of the north county of Michigan alone, but practically of the entire land. For example, not only had the economic disease been stealing up on us for some time instead of being a sudden cloudburst, but many things had happened in government and public opinion that were to affect both the immediate emergency and its sequelae. For a decade or two prior to the depression, government and public opinion had been making progress in the provision of old age pensions, mother's pensions, workman's compensation, and unemployment insurance, and in other ways of dealing more rationally and efficiently with the growing millions of cases of distress that were piling up as the by-products of our age of machine industry. The total effect of this has been to establish, on the part of the people, a sense that they had a right to government help against poverty.

This fact has a direct significance for the relief system of today and tomorrow that is difficult to overestimate. The less tangible facts were visible in the psychology of the people early in the depression. While no bloody rebellions are on record, there was a potential threat that pervaded almost every community in this country, urban or rural. Riots and near riots in the cities have been well publicized, but the extent to which farmers and village folk were ready to stand up for their rights instead of groveling for soup or bread has had less attention. Mrs. Armstrong gives us two excellent examples, one, a most dramatic one, early in 1933 in connection with the threat of forced mortgage foreclosures; the other, more directly related to relief. Politicians and benighted business men had brought about a situation by which the county was going to lose Federal support in its relief program, and on a given day the entire structure of relief administration was to be destroyed. Heroic efforts to find a way out had failed. The offices were going to be closed. There was going to be no more relief.

FERA photo

Work relief for women under FERA

> Our men in boots, particularly the city work cases, did not intend to sit down peacefully and watch their chance to support their families vanish . . . They were apparently well organized. Their intention was to make no move until the newspaper came out late in the afternoon. If the officials had signed the agreement, and relief was to be resumed, there would be no trouble. The signature of the County Clerk was merely a matter of form. But if the other three had refused to sign, there were three well organized groups of more than a hundred men each, and each with a definite leader, which would start at a set hour in the evening for the homes of the three officials. If the officials did not change their minds, their homes would be burned, and just what would be done with the men themselves had not been revealed . . .

In part, at least, this psychology explains the history of emergency relief since its creation in 1929. Much of the early history as told in Harry Hopkins's "Spending to Save" now sounds like far away history, and yet it is only a few years removed. The first reaction to the emergency was to wish it out of existence. (This method still has its noisy advocates who wish "to restore confidence" in order to bring back the golden days.) Next the philanthropic agencies took hold, and during 1930 and '31 they made heroic efforts, raised incredible amounts, especially in the large cities, and handled with creditable effectiveness streams of clients beyond any of their previous experience. Next came aid from municipalities. Meanwhile, the Federal Government had been working in the larger field with banks, mortgage loans, loans to States, etc. At this point the States themselves began to consider or establish Emergency

(Continued on page 16)

* *A SOCIAL STUDY OF PITTSBURGH. By Philip Klein. Columbia University Press.* 1938.

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Progress in Puerto Rico

PUERTO RICO AND ITS PEOPLE. By Trumbull White. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. 1938. $3.50.

Reviewed by ERNEST GRUENING

MR. TRUMBULL WHITE'S experience spans the entire association of Puerto Rico with the United States. He went there as a correspondent with the American forces which occupied the Island during the war with Spain and saw the Island at the close of its nearly four centuries of Spanish colonial rule. He returned in 1937 and took the time to investigate its numerous political, economic, and social problems and to study the manners and customs of its people in their unique setting. To this task he brought the keen reportorial equipment of a veteran newspaperman, a wealth of background, and a kindliness and broad sympathy coupled with an objectiveness which is as desirable as it is rare. The result is a compendium of more pertinent and interesting information about Puerto Rico than is to be found elsewhere in print. It is particularly timely now when the constructive efforts of the first federal administration to take cognizance of the complexities of the Puerto Rican problems and its responsibility toward them are beginning to bear fruit.

Mr. White, as a good journalist, brought with him no thesis and no preconceptions. Those who desire passionate and tendencious affirmation on either side of the controversial issues which have arisen in Puerto Rico in recent years, will not find it. Instead they will encounter a judicious and well balanced presentation of pros and cons, and the exposition of the diverse views of Puerto Ricans and of continental Americans whose experience and responsibilities in Puerto Rico rendered their views and comments pertinent. But this does not mean that Mr. White reached no conclusions. He refers to "the extreme over-population which is part of the cause of the expansion of Island poverty," a rock of basic fact which so many commentators on Puerto Rico have sought to avoid. He notes that La Perla, a hideous aggregation of loathsome shacks, is more conspicuous because it lies in the shadow of the most beautiful architectural monument to the genius of the Spanish Conquistadores—the fortifications of El Morro and San Cristobal. He calls it the "most wretched slum settlement under the American flag."

He observed that the English language is not taught, understood, or spoken as widely in Puerto Rico as it was ten years ago. He comments caustically on the press of Puerto Rico, which reminds him of the vituperative, personal journalism of America's earlier decades.

He bestows high praise on a few continental Americans who have labored for the island's welfare: Dr. Bailey K. Ashford, who discovered the hookworm and found it the cause of so much of the islanders' anemia and ill health; Atherton Lee, Director of the Puerto Rico Agricultural Experiment Station of the United States Department of Agriculture, who in the little-explored field of tropical agriculture is finding new crops to help sustain the Island population; Col. John W. Wright, commanding the United States military forces in Puerto Rico, historian and scholar, who is *con amore* restoring the ancient fortifications and architectural monuments begun by Ponce de Leon in the early sixteenth century, which for the forty years of United States occupancy and for generations previously had been abandoned to disintegration.

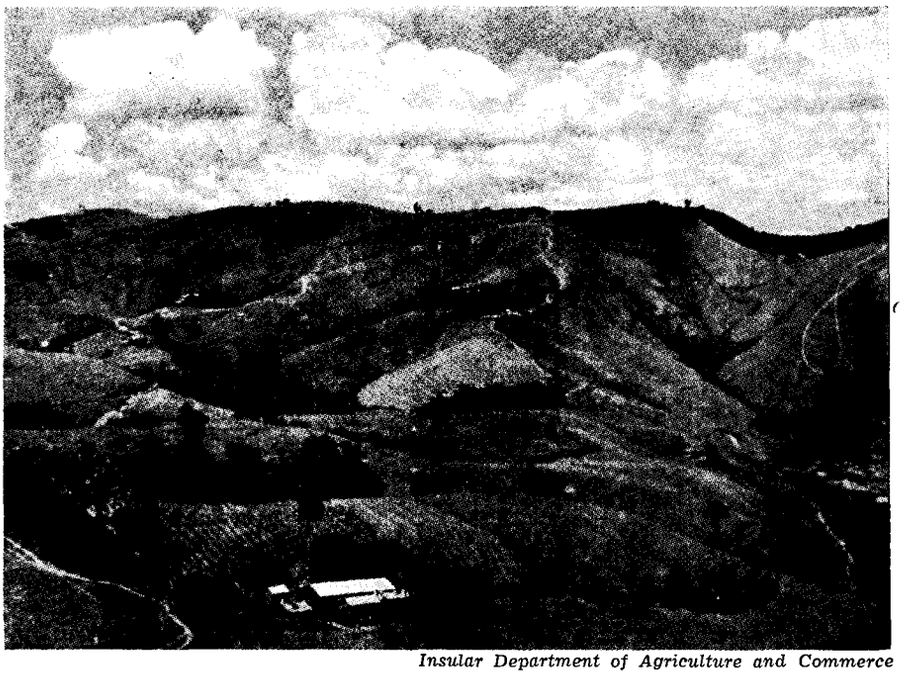
He notes that the passenger rates between the mainland and Puerto Rico are "high for the voyage and for the accommodations," a criticism which will find a sympathetic hearing among a vast number of Puerto Ricans.

He points to the paradoxical difficulty of buying in Puerto Rico the Island's most famous product, its needlework, which apparently is so popular that it must be rushed to New York upon completion, and can scarcely be bought even by the tourists whom the Insular government, under the active leadership of Governor Blanton Winship, is seeking to attract. In this connection, Mr. White is keenly sensitive to the beauty of Puerto Rico, its mountains and valleys, its trees and flowers, its palm-fringed beaches, a charm to which he feels "only hyperbole can do justice."

With all his gathered facts and opinions, he finds it still difficult to determine whether Puerto Rico is to be a problem child in our American family or a prodigy worthy of our every pride. But he is keenly aware of the responsibility of the United States in a situation which its people and not the people of Puerto Rico created. He feels it our duty to pour money into Puerto Rico to support the requirements of rehabilitation. Yet he is mindful of past contributions to Puerto Rico. In the material field, he lists the building of 1,200 miles of highway since 1900, educational facilities multiplied tenfold (though still inadequate); the work of the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration, concerning which Mr. White feels that "the authorities may take proper pride in the broad excellence of what has been done and what is being done to accomplish maximum results . . . with so little 'slip' in the operation of the great machine." There is also the non-material contribution of the United States, which Mr. White, expressing both his own view and that of various Puerto Ricans, values highly. That contribution is liberty—our free institutions and our system of government. For these there seems to be in Puerto Rico a steadily growing appreciation and Mr. White deems it increasingly apparent that Island opinion is overwhelmingly in favor of permanent union under the American flag.

Excellent photographs, generously scattered throughout the book, greatly enhance its value. A few factual errors do not detract materially from the value of the clearest and most readable presentation of Puerto Rican affairs which has yet appeared.

Ernest Gruening is director of the Division of Territories and Island Possessions of the Department of the Interior, and has been Administrator of Puerto Rico Reconstruction since 1935.



Insular Department of Agriculture and Commerce

Mountainside fields and homes of the interior valleys.

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Away from It All

THE DARK RIVER. By Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall. Boston: Little, Brown & Company (Atlantic Monthly Press). 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

IT is now nearly twenty years since "The Moon and Sixpence" and "White Shadows in the South Seas" stirred in a disheartened post-war world the impulse to get away from it all. Of the few who actually went to the South Seas, the fewer who stayed, Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall have been the most successful, perhaps because they produce books for export instead of copra; and here they pay their debt to those tropic isles that have given them a pleasant life and a comfortable livelihood. "The Dark River" is not much of a novel, but as a travelogue of Tahiti and the Tuamotus it makes almost anybody in a disheartened pre-war world feel like getting away from it all while there is yet time.

The plot is simple enough, and the authors give away whatever mystery it might contain in the first chapter, when somebody tells somebody else what happened twenty years ago. Alan Hardie, brilliant young English scientist (whose father, the General, regards practically everybody but Englishmen as "niggers") takes a trip around the world because his eyes are in bad shape. In a remote Tahitian valley he meets Naia, descendant of the local gentry, whose widowed mother wants to keep her to herself; but Nature takes its course. What happened to Alan? Readers of "The Rosary" can guess. Who did Naia turn out to be? Readers of "The Sheik" could guess, if the authors had not obligingly divulged the secret to everybody but the characters. The tragedy with which the book rather unexpectedly ends is as fortuitous as tragedies are apt to be in real life; but in life you have to take it, and it is a little more difficult to make it fit in a novel.

But never mind the plot. Those pictures of the landscape and the life of rural Tahiti, of the Tuamotus, of the uninhabited atoll where Alan and Naia are flung by the storm, are calculated to make everybody take one look at the scenes and the people around him, and then buy a one-way ticket for Papeete.

Between Shirtsleeves

HARRY PICKERING. By Robert E. McClure. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE STEVENS

MR. McCLURE had a very good idea for a novel when he began this one, and it is well put in the quotation on the title page, from Dr. Carrel's "Man, the Unknown":

"From their birth, these children live under conditions that bring about the atrophy of their adaptive systems. . . . They are crammed with food, they sleep as much as they like, have no responsibility, never make an intellectual effort, learn only what amuses them, and struggle against nothing. The result is well known. They generally become pleasant and handsome, often strong, easily tired, extremely selfish, without intellectual acuteness, moral sense, and nervous resistance. These defects are not of ancestral origin. They are to be observed in the descendants of the men who built up American industries. . . ."

Robert E. McClure

That is as good a characterization of Harry Pickering, spoiled son of a wealthy, self-made motor manufacturer, as Mr. McClure achieves in 374 pages. When you have read the title page, you have to all intents and purposes read the novel. Like so many novels built on good ideas, it is a case history of a type—a typical member of a typical family. Harry does everything you would predict: gets kicked out of college; has an adolescent affair with a chorus girl; goes into his father's business, where he introduces labor espionage; makes two unsuccessful marriages; gets squeezed out when his father's plant is sold to one of the big combines; ends in bewilderment and frustration, with nothing to do but drink.

This is all fair enough; there are plenty of people like Harry, and his story makes pretty good reading. Only pretty good, because once you get the idea, each successive episode is a little less interesting. "Harry Pickering" is a good job in the sense that it does exactly what the author intended; but it falls short of being a good novel, because Harry is always a case, never an individual. And if Harry's character is supposed to prove anything about the degradation of our industrial families, the point is vitiated by the fact that both his brother and sister are very decent, intelligent, and attractive people.

Graham Greene

Religious Melodrama

BRIGHTON ROCK. By Graham Greene. New York: The Viking Press. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

MY mother has often remarked that she likes murder stories, because they are the last stronghold of morality in fiction, where crimes are still regarded as being criminal. And of all murder stories, the most strictly moral are those of murder without mystery. In mysteries proper, the murder may be only a chess problem for the detective, or even a lark for the amateur sleuth; but the novel in which the murder is foreseen by the reader must depend for its effect on the reader's sense that murder is an appalling thing. And the murder is truly appalling in "Brighton Rock"; for the victim is a coward, and knows that death is following him; and the murderer is a Catholic, and feels that damnation is following him.

The first act is played in the gaudy gaiety of a Brighton Bank Holiday, where among the swarming trippers is Fred Hale, who is one of a gang of race-track touts involved in a war of razor-slashings and murder with another gang, and who knows that they mean to kill him. Knowing that a witness is his only safety, he tries to find some one to stay with him, and succeeds in picking up Ida, a big friendly woman, whose lips taste of port and Guinness, who likes a bit of fun, who isn't the sort to let a man down. But in the few minutes that she is tidying up, Fred is killed,—by "the Boy," as the author calls him, who has succeeded to the leadership of his gang at seventeen by force of brains and character, as cold-blooded in action as any killer out of Dashiell Hammett; and yet by training a Roman Catholic, a singular combination of callousness and conscience. Like Macbeth, the Boy finds it necessary to go on covering one killing with another; and worse, from his point of view—he finds himself

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obliged to marry a girl to stop her mouth, and from a psychic trauma in his youth the marital relation is horrible to him. The girl, Rose, is a Roman Catholic too, and in contracting an illegal marriage she knows that she is damning her soul to eternity; but she loves him.

There is the framework of this strange religious melodrama. The psychology, especially in its most distorted aspects, is not always altogether convincing; especially, the Boy's horror of the physical aspects of sex is not made wholly credible; nor, perhaps, is his command of a gang of criminals. But what is wholly credible and comprehensible, on its own terms, is the triangular conflict of *Weltanschauungen,* the devoted Catholicism of Rose, the inverted Catholicism of the Boy, struggling between God and Satan and feeling them both as persons intimately known; and the sturdy roast-beef Protestantism of Ida. This is by all means a book to read for sheer breathless excitement; but much more, it is a book to read for its resolution, in the words of the old priest, about "the appalling strangeness of the mercy of God."

Death of a Nation

THE LAST FIVE HOURS OF AUSTRIA. By Eugene Lennhoff. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES FREDERICK GREEN

ALMOST everyone who followed closely the newspaper and radio accounts of the March 11-13 week-end, during which Austria was absorbed into the new Great Germany, must have tried to imagine for himself the excitement and confusion in the Vienna streets, as well as the personal terror of its anti-Nazi citizens. Here is the first book to relate the stirring events which preceded the resignation of Chancellor Schuschnigg, written by Eugene Lennhoff, editor of the Vienna *Telegraph.*

Marked for death or imprisonment because of his support of the Schuschnigg regime, Mr. Lennhoff escaped from his newspaper building just as the Nazis were coming through the main entrance. In describing these last five hours of Austria in the short, forceful sentences of modern journalism, expertly translated, the author provides the outside world with a spirited narrative of German intrigues, governmental paralysis, street parades, and wholesale emigration.

By covering the period between the Berchtesgaden agreement of February 12 and the collapse of March 12, this volume is really an epilogue to Dr. Schuschnigg's "My Austria," especially as it reveals even further the limitations of the Chancellor and the weakness of his administration. Mr. Lennhoff stresses the fatal error of the Schuschnigg government—its failure to reconcile the Socialists, who had been driven underground after the massacre of February, 1934. "Schuschnigg should not have waited so long," says a participant in a workers' procession. "He's trying in two days to make up for four years of lost chances. It can't be done."

Not only did Dr. Schuschnigg fail to bulwark his government with support from the laboring classes, but he also lost control of his subordinates, who either became last minute converts to National Socialism or failed to realize the full danger of the crisis. The relation of Italy to Central Europe, which "My Austria" discussed in extremely vague fashion, is not clarified by Mr. Lennhoff, who confidently expected that diplomatic and military support would be received from Mussolini. No one in Vienna believed that Schuschnigg could have announced his plebiscite without obtaining a promise of Italian assistance. Either the Chancellor received such a promise and was betrayed; or, more likely, he gambled on the plebiscite—and lost.

It is evident that Dr. Schuschnigg and his colleagues underestimated Hitler's capacity for intrigue and sabotage and incapacity for compromise. By breaking every pledge of non-intervention and using Dr. Seyss-Inquart as a "Trojan horse" in the cabinet, the Nazis were able to take Austria without resort to war. One of the most dramatic portions of the book concerns the ominous silence which preceded Schuschnigg's resignation; after hours of parades and demonstrations, every Nazi suddenly disappeared from the Vienna streets—to collect uniform and gun. Mr. Lennhoff realized the full extent of Nazi efficiency when he read his own newspaper on the day after his flight to Hungary. "*National Socialist Telegraph* was the name. . . . To the right and left of the title was a swastika. The names of the new Editor and managing director were unknown to me. The new regime had been inaugurated with incredible rapidity."

James Frederick Green is on the staff of the Foreign Policy Association.

Europe in Chaos

CONSCRIPT EUROPE. By Randolph Leigh. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by HENRY C. WOLFE

THIS book will undoubtedly cause controversy. Boldly taking issue with those American groups which advocate closer ties with the Old World, Mr. Leigh sets out to prove "how utterly alien the whole European Concept of today is to the American Ideal." He says in the foreword, "If the book must be classified as pro or anti anything in Europe, it might be said that it is anti the whole predatory pack now dominant there—even in holy Albion!"

Bachrach

Randolph Leigh

The author loses no time in launching an attack upon "oligarchy's England," upon the monarchy as an institution, and upon most of the rulers. In two hundred years the royal family "has not produced one person of pre-eminent capacity for public leadership." By this time the reader has gathered that Mr. Leigh is not an admirer of Britannia.

"The Great Breeding Ground" is Hitler's Reich, "one out of every eight persons born there being illegitimate." The German population is increasing rapidly, the author reminds us, thereby complicating the food problem. Indeed, he asks whether Austro-Germany will starve. This brings up the question of colonies as a way out for Germany. He believes that the status quo will not long continue. Germany's "real money is bayonet money." With that kind of currency can Hitler get control of what he wants?

France, to Mr. Leigh, is "Gimmeland." "France ranks first both in expectation of American largess, and in ability to get it." He does not concentrate his fire on the war debts. Apparently he writes them off.

For the Italians the author seems to harbor no great admiration. But he does think it "rash" to assume that today the "Italians are militaristic but not military." As for the "ultimate bankruptcy" of Italy, he believes that Italy's rivals are also threatened with economic collapse. This discussion of the "Continent of the Intermittent Christians" does not make soothing reading. Mr. Leigh expects Europe to continue her "freebooting at home and abroad."

While the author does not neglect to cite authority, his picture of the trans-Atlantic scene lacks balance. It seems to this reviewer that his argument would be stronger if, in the midst of all the gloom, he could detect some ray of light. Surely there are some unselfish forces in Europe working toward liberalism and peace. In portraying only the dark side, Mr. Leigh has overshot his mark. But his book should not be answered by blanket indictments. It ought to be read by all parties to the controversy.

Henry C. Wolfe is the author of "The German Octopus."

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Kenneth Roberts

BY BEN AMES WILLIAMS

ANY young man beginning newspaper work in Boston about 1910 soon became familiar with the name "Kenneth L. Roberts," signed to leading news stories and to features in the *Boston Post*. Kenneth Roberts—the middle initial went the way of all flesh when "Arundel" was published—had graduated from Cornell in 1908; and before 1911, when he and Anna Mosser were married, New England had already begun to recognize in him the first-rate reporter whose reputation, ten years later, would be international.

As a reporter then and as a novelist now his greatest assets are a tireless diligence in sifting a grain of fact from a bushel of chaff, and his capacity for viewing that fact when he has found it with an extraordinary mixture of towering indignation and an almost feminine compassion and understanding.

Probably his capacity for indignation is in day-to-day contact his most conspicuous trait. There was an occasion when after a day's fishing in the Colorado mountains he tried to pull off, with a boot jack, the cowboy boots he had worn. They were too tight, and wet besides. The first one came off easily enough. He pressed his sock-clad foot on the boot jack and tried the other; but it persisted in slipping out so that he kicked his toe, protected only by a sock, with the heel of his boot. He did it again and again; and his indignation at the boots, the boot jack, Colorado, the water which had wetted his boots, his own clumsiness, his heel, and his toe was comprehensive, inclusive, and gorgeous as a mountain sunset.

But he can be equally indignant at the base, culpable, depraved, and futile asininity of the New Hampshire State Liquor Commission in charging $4.85 for what he calls a "lousy tourist brandy" while they only charge $4.05 for another brand which he rates as infinitely superior. He is indignant at a thousand things: at little boys who run outboard motors around in meaningless circles, at bill-boards, at people who break in on the working hours of busy authors, at cooks who roast ducks to a cinder and cook partridges to a crisp and fry trout till they are flavorless as ashes, at politicians, at Americans who are violently interested in foreign affairs and supremely apathetic when American problems are discussed. Above all things he hates sham. Newfoundland guides, trying to point out to a fisherman a salmon in the water, may say: "You have to undersee the shine." Ken has a remarkable ability to "undersee the shine." He is not deceived by surfaces. Let him dislike a man, and he is apt to say in the tone of one who smells a bad egg at the breakfast table: "Why, the guy is bogus! He's phony!" He is equally infuriated by a bogus, phony opinion.

Booth Tarkington on this point comments: "Mr. Roberts is calm, peaceful in voice and gesture, moderate in his utterance, during seven or eight hours out of the twenty-four—usually from about 12:30 A.M. until toward breakfast time. In regard to his manner for the rest of the day, I have heard an upholsterer who did some work for him say, 'I'd walk miles to hear Mr. Roberts when he's *real* mad. When he's only *half* that way, his cussing is a pleasure to anybody!'

"Mr. Roberts has, certainly, strong opinions. For instance, he is keenly interested in the subject of Interior Decoration. On the physiological side, he believes that the walls of the stomach should be warmly tinted with Maine catsup or ketchup, here and there dotted with a bean or bit of fish spine. His eloquence in advocacy of this belief is so loud, his influence so powerful, and his own home-made catsup so ardent that, having often accepted his hospitality until August, 1936, I have been ever since in the hands of specialists.

"He is even more earnest in his feeling about Interior Decoration as applied to dwellings. Disapproving, for instance, of a mantelpiece in a house in which he was a week-end visitor, he has been known to tear it out and dispose of it with the aid of no levers, saws, axes, or any other tools or implements save his own simple teeth.

"He was not always so extreme. His boyhood was spent in several quiet old New England towns, parts of which are still standing."

So it may be taken as fact that Ken can rise to heights of indignation. He is incidentally—when thus aroused—the most profane of men, regardless of the company in which he finds himself; and he is at the same time the least offensive. A passage from one of his letters, written from Italy, will suggest the combination of rage, irony, sarcasm, and pure invective to which he can be at times aroused. He had taken a wire-haired fox terrier to Italy; and he wrote:

"This dog proved to be a cretin of the deepest dye, and we had no sooner reached here than he came down with mange. Every waking moment, thereafter, was spent in applying mange cures and trying to obtain more mange cures. Oddly enough, you cannot buy mange cures in Italy; so I cabled London to send me mange cure by air mail. It was sent air mail, but the wops stopped it at the frontier and held it for sixteen days, trying to find out what it was. These thus and sos find out what a thing is by refusing to open it or look at the label, and just leaving it lay to see if it explodes or anything. When the incubation period has passed without an explosion, they let it go on to its destination. This system isn't much help when the goods in question are medicine, and the patient is dying. Well, our little dog, that was brought to be a companion for Anna while I dug out another American tragedy, has spent his days having every known ointment and unguent rubbed on him—Zonite, Noxema, Mennen's Skin Balm, Lanoline, Nail-polish, Hexylresorcinol, Frances Fox face lotion, Hotel Lotti Barker Shop Hair Restorer, Ed Pinaud's Eau de Quinine, Herpicide-will-save-it, Sulphur Ointment, and Olive Oil. Now he has had Sherley's Mange Cure on him for eight days. It's black and greasy, and he has to be chained to the leg of the stove, looking like a high-yaller dog from Harlem. Such is life among the foreign element."

Take another passage from his letters, commenting on a review of "Arundel"

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which had displeased him. "I was in despair over it—to think that these unspeakable asses, after whining and howling for the past fifty years because no novels had been written about Maine, should take a six hundred and eighteen page book and say: 'This book is lousy because it has a historical error on page 485'—and then be hopelessly wrong about the error."

It may be gathered that his correspondence is more forceful than his published works. In his book "For Authors Only"—which contains some four hundred odd pages of rich and salty humor calculated to make any man, author or otherwise, laugh till he cries—he makes a few remarks about the Pulitzer Prize awards. By way of a deadly parallel, read what he says in that book and then read this excerpt from a letter written from an Italian hilltop in 1932:

"I see by the papers that the Pulitzer Prize went to a charming story about a lot of Chink farmers playing in the worst kind of Chinese luck, but with a number of daring passages about Chinese concubines and Chinese red-light districts, said story being the one which most completely conformed to the stipulations in the will of the late Joe Pulitzer, who wanted the prize to go to the novel which best depicted American life and manners. Me, I know a little something about the late Mr. Pulitzer; and I can only say I'm glad the pore feller's dead, and not obliged to hear his private secretary read aloud to him a novel supposed to convey the year's best picture of American life. Pulitzer was pretty effervescent, and as he became more and more *au courant* with the lives of Chinese concubines, and struggled harder and harder to fit them into his outmoded notions of American life, several large blood clots would have formed suddenly within him, radiated violently to every part of his body, and he would have exploded with such force as not only to wreck all New York, but to shatter windows in Flatbush and White Plains. I wouldn't want you to get the notion that I'm sore at Pulitzer Prize Committees, or that I think they're partially lacking in anything. I merely think they're stupid little fellers, putting every possible crimp in a big man's big idea, and that they're wholly lacking in understanding, as well as being (end of sentence deleted out of deference to sensitive readers). If I'm right, the situation calls for contempt; not soreness. I *may* be wrong, even though their choice this year dealt with Chinese coolies and concubines; year before last with a Navajo whore; the year before that with a nigger prostitute. You probably get the drift of my thoughts. There are some things you want to gag over and can't because you're laughing; and some things you want to laugh at but can't because of gagging. That, it seems to me, describes the Pulitzer awards in a mild way."

This letter, note well, was written in 1932. In 1938 *The Saturday Review* polled forty-six leading literary critics, asking for nominations for the Pulitzer Prize. Nineteen of them named "Northwest Passage," second choice receiving only nine votes. Ken thereupon offered, laid, and has since collected numerous bets that "Northwest Passage" would not be selected.

It is affecting to see Ken's occasional attempts to smother his indignation. He will listen to someone and say: "Yes?" "Um-hm!" "Is that so?" But at the same time, his cheek begins to empurple, his eyes to kindle, small blue flames come out of his ears, vapor rises from his brow; and unless the pressure of politeness is too great, sooner or later he blows off the safety valve. Sometimes his indignation is belated. Once four of us played golf. Ken has a swing the slowness of which is somewhat exaggerated. He deplored that day the fact that he got so little distance; and after dinner in the evening we three explained to him the defects in his swing, with illustrations, and gave him elaborate advice. He absorbed it all; but brooding over the point during the night he remembered that his score that day had been a stroke or two lower than the best ball of the three of us; and when he came down to breakfast he was in such a towering rage that his eggs, which came on the table soft-boiled, were by the heat he generated hard-boiled before he ate them.

When he is thoroughly roused, he seems to grow taller. Once in New Mexico he, being mounted, saw a wild turkey within twenty yards. He raised his gun to shoot; but his horse changed ends, leaving Ken momentarily suspended in mid-air. By the time he landed on the ground, the horse and the turkey were both gone. He came stalking out of the thicket with his gun in his hands, and when he called: "Where's my horse?" it is rank under-statement to say that he seemed eight feet tall.

If Ken were not a great novelist he might have been a great crusader. During his years as a staff man on *The Saturday Evening Post* he more than once functioned in that role. His signature appeared in the *Post* columns some two hundred times, and many of the hundred and eighty-three articles he wrote for them had a highly explosive quality. When in 1920 he wrote a series of articles about immigration, that practically ended immigration. He interviewed Aguinaldo and wrote an article about the Philippines called "Bringing Chaos Out of Order," so devastating that Aguinaldo disingenuously denied the interview, while Philippine politicians, in a panic, not only denied that Roberts had been in the Philippines but passed resolutions forbidding him to come there again! He interviewed King Constantine of Greece and predicted his downfall; and King Constantine denied that interview, but he downfell just the same. Ken wrote a series of articles on the Florida boom, and the boom busted almost immediately.

From the time his first novel was published, he carried on a one-man crusade for authors' rights as against the habits and customs of publishers. When he first gave voice to his ideas of what a book contract should be, there were some screams of pain; but as he said the other day: "The very publishers who were saying, five years ago, that my terms were cruel and unusual are now begging to be allowed to meet them and even to do a little better. There has never been anything in any of my contracts that isn't as fair to the publisher as to myself. I never ask for advances. I don't like advances and only want dough as a book earns it. What I chiefly want is information. There are mighty few office boys in publishers' offices who don't know more about the progress and earnings of books than do the men who struggled and sweated to write them; but when I insisted on weekly reports of book sales, I had to fight to get them. Then I couldn't stand the way publishers arbitrarily let books go into cheap editions, and I insisted that cheap editions couldn't be made without my consent. I insisted that

Kenneth Roberts with his wire-haired terrier, Serena Blandish

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if a clause in a contract was broken, all rights in the book covered by that contract should revert to the author. I fought for these clauses because I wanted to be in a position where I'd never have to fight. Now my publishers and I never have any misunderstandings, and never have any trouble."

Ken is a State of Maine man, born and bred there, living there except when he goes to Italy to escape casual callers during a winter of work. He habitually lives in two houses at the same time. They are only some fifty yards apart, so that he can—and does—sleep in one, and work and dine in the other. For added variety, he does much of his cooking outdoors. His family consists of himself, Mrs. Roberts, and Serena Blandish, a small wire-haired fox terrier with none of the unpleasant traits of that cretin of a dog which suffered from mange in Italy. When he is working, he works twelve and fourteen hours a day; but a five-minute interruption may cost him a whole day's work.

He was twenty years a reporter before he wrote the first line of "Arundel"; and his ability as a reporter and his capacity for indignation are the source of greatness in his novels. His weakness as a novelist is his compassion. The Aristotelian precept may be paraphrased: In tragedy, the hero should be of a moderate excellence (or depravity) and he should be changed from prosperity to adversity through some great (human) error. It is permitted to believe that Kenneth Roberts has written three great novels. "The Lively Lady" and "Captain Caution," exquisitely titled, are fine tales; but "Arundel" and "Rabble in Arms" and now "Northwest Passage" have stature. The last, particularly, has those qualities of magnitude and order which the Greeks rated as the essence of beauty. It is complete. It shows the hero in his heroic period, when he dominated his immediate scene and everything about him; it carries him on until he becomes a pale ghost, appearing and disappearing in the distance, fading till he is no more than a shabby shadow far away. The tragedy is complete; it has an end. The second half of "Northwest Passage," in which other actors move into the foreground and fill the stage while Rogers recedes and diminishes until it is only mercy for the reader to turn his eyes away, has a classic excellence and beauty. In that book, Kenneth Roberts had his plan; it was a whole plan; he wrote it whole.

He overcame, in writing of Rogers, that deep compassion in him which will never let him finish the tragedy of Arnold. It may be that he loved Arnold too much to go on. "Arundel" and "Rabble in Arms" are actually the first two books of a masterpiece; the third remains unwritten.

Perhaps by saying this I will provoke him to one those towering rages. I can only hope that his compassion will come to my rescue in time.

The Iodine of Kennebunk

TRENDING INTO MAINE. By Kenneth Roberts. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1938. $4.

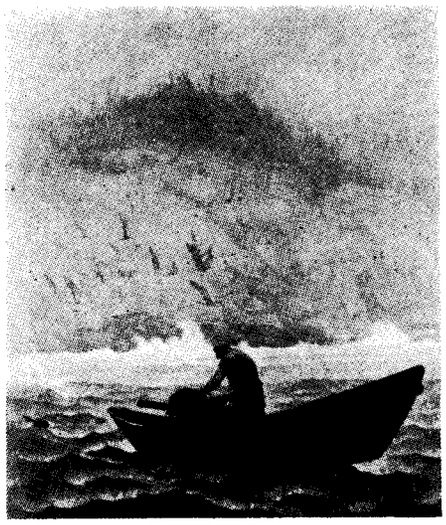
Reviewed by E. B. White

WHEN Kenneth Roberts isn't writing a historical novel (which isn't often), he takes one peck of ripe tomatoes, puts them through a sieve, brings the juice almost to a boil and adds vinegar, allspice, mustard, and powdered cloves. The result is ketchup. Or he rows out between the ledges at half tide and fishes for cunners. Or he drives mournfully up and down U. S. No. 1 with a pad and pencil, copying the highway signs. Or he retraces Arnold's route to Quebec. Or he mixes up a batch of letters, notes, and clippings and produces a book like "Trending into Maine," into which he pours some of his ketchup, most of his great-great grandmothers, and every ounce of his passionate admiration for the State of Maine.

"Trending into Maine" is not so much a book as it is a visit with Kenneth Roberts. He takes you into the kitchen, sits you down by the stove, hands you a doughnut, and begins to stuff you full of Arundel, Maine traditions, Maine smells, Maine people, the hardships of soldiering, the pleasures of duck's breasts, the bravery of sea captains' daughters, and the iniquities of Franklin D. Roosevelt. This is an enjoyable experience provided you have some feeling either for or against Maine. It is a sort of personal guide book (a Kenneth Roberts work relief project), containing history, mythology, cookery, hints for partridge hunters, old letters, thumbnail sketches of early residents of Arundel, private tribulations of a novelist, a Ben Ames Williams story reprinted from the *Saturday Evening Post*, a guide to the fishing lakes of northern Maine provided by the president of the Bangor & Aroostook Railway, and a list of authors (past and present) who have thrived on the pine scents of this incomparable portion of America. There are also fourteen color pages by N. C. Wyeth.

Mr. Roberts believes that persons who live between the Piscataqua and the Penobscot Rivers glow with a special passion for writing. There is a theory, he says, that their enormous literary urge is caused by the iodine released from seaweed when the surf pounds against the rocks. I don't know about this, but it sounds plausible enough and is a fine thing to study over. The rate the books are coming out, the time may come when everybody in southern Maine will have to be given a stiff dose of white of egg.

"Trending into Maine" starts in 1605 with the arrival of Captain George Waymouth, who proceeds to sail his little ship up the St. George's River while his clerk,



The Lobsterman (hauling in a light fog). Painting by N. C. Wyeth.

James Rosier, makes ecstatic entries in his notebook.

> Our Captaine discovered up a great river, trending alongst into the Maine about forty miles . . . the beauty and goodness whereof I cannot by relation sufficiently demonstrate. . . As we passed with a gentle winde up with our ship in this River, any man may conceive with what admiration we all consented in joy.

Kenneth Roberts, three hundred years later, still consents in joy. He has even bought a place on the St. George's, and hopes the trailer people won't find him.

In these queasy times, when the human spirit is at low ebb and the charitable disorders of paternalism afflict us all, it is natural that a loyal son should remember his forebears. Mr. Roberts's people were fighters, mariners, adventurers. They were stolen by Indians, burned for witches. One of them was thrown into Dartmoor prison for privateering. They had character and quality; they were brave in storm, uncomplaining in sickness, strong in faith. Wives went to sea along with their husbands. One of the best things in the book is a letter from a sea captain's wife to somebody on shore, describing the dismasting of her husband's vessel in a storm. It is a model of good reporting and good character, and you don't find its like today when you open the morning mail.

The seeming degeneration of the human race, its dependence, its effeminacy—this is the fox in Mr. Roberts's bosom. He sees in Maine the last stronghold of the individualist; in its history he experiences a vicarious hardihood. His admiration for the men who marched with Arnold is a living flame which he tends always, even driving into Portland for a bowl of pea soup at the Congress Square Hotel. These revolutionary heroes have grown to such proportions in his life that he becomes

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violently annoyed when small inaccuracies of local tradition seem to detract from their character. For example, he devotes several bitterly sarcastic pages of "Trending into Maine" to refuting the story that Arnold's men enjoyed a meal of bear-meat and pumpkin pie at Fort Western. I have no doubt he is right and the legend wrong, but the interesting thing is the effect of this alleged gorge, not on the soldiers of 1775 but on the novelist of 1938. It is so obvious that he doesn't *want* those valiant men to have a square meal—it might make sissies of them, if only in his own imagination. The empty stomach and the full resolve—those are the memories which keep up our courage today, in the face of this dismal and undistributed abundance.

The book also contains a recipe for hot buttered rum, a good description of Aroostook County, and an indictment of the New Deal's dereliction at Passamaquoddy. If you like Maine and would prefer to see Mr. Roosevelt drawn and quartered, this is your bearmeat.

Hostile Ideals

OUR COUNTRY, OUR PEOPLE, AND THEIRS. By M. E. Tracy. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1938. $1.75.

Reviewed by VERA MICHELES DEAN

THIS typographically striking book attempts to answer the innumerable questions which are daily raised about the relative merits of democracy and dictatorship by comparing the situation in Germany, Italy, and Russia with that of the United States. While the compact and clearly written analyses of each country's achievements are objective in approach, there is no doubt of the author's own answer to the problem. Democracy, as practised in the United States, is in his opinion infinitely superior to fascism or communism, whether weighed in political, economic, or social scales. Even if, as President Roosevelt has said, one-third of the nation is living below the American standard, "inferentially, at least" two-thirds are living up to or above it. "In what country on earth," asks Mr. Tracy, "are two-thirds of the people as well off? Certainly not in Italy, Germany, or Russia."

Mr. Tracy, editor of *Current History*, is not unaware that democracy, desirable as it may be, flourishes only in certain political and economic climates which may not exist in the dictatorial countries. In his excellent analysis of Germany's geographic situation, he points out that the German people, from the beginning of their history, have been plagued by a sense of insecurity owing to their central position in the midst of hostile or more powerful peoples. Nor does he overlook the fact that the United States, like Russia, is richly endowed with worldly goods, as compared with Germany and Italy, which lack most raw materials.

Life on an Ice Floe

ON TOP OF THE WORLD. By Lazar Brontman. New York: Covici-Friede. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by MARIE AHNIGHITO PEARY

THIS is an absorbing narrative. While it is the work of a correspondent of a Soviet newspaper, it contains so many direct quotations from members of the party that it becomes, in part at least, the story of the participants themselves. There is a foreword by the famous Doctor Schmidt, head of the government bureau concerned with all Arctic affairs, in which he speaks with justifiable pride of the success of the expedition.

The book begins with a brief and somewhat incomplete résumé of Polar expeditions of the past, with the emphasis upon the dramatic and striking features rather than upon the actual exploration. The object of the Soviet expedition was to establish at the North Pole a base which could remain on a particular ice floe for a long period and thus take observations over a sufficient time to furnish a large amount of data with respect to scientific problems in very high latitudes. The idea was suggested by Nansen years ago but only the development of the aeroplane made the plan practicable. It will probably surprise most readers to learn that the plans for this expedition were the work of years; that the expedition was not attempted until a wealth of experience had been acquired by the government's experts in such work as the Northeast passage development and the Arctic aeroplane patrols along the north and northwest coasts of Russia. When it was finally launched, the planning, organization, and preparation went forward with a speed, a sureness, and a meticulous attention to detail more generally associated with German ventures. It was, like all else in the Soviet Union, an entirely governmental enterprise and bears no analogy to the independently led expeditions with which Americans are familiar.

The author went with the planes from Moscow, by Archangel, Novaya Zembla, and Rudolph Island to the Pole itself. He stayed with the party until all the planes came back and left the four scientists to their vigil and their drift. It is this part of the book which holds the greatest interest for the general public because the story is told with a zest and an appreciation of the loyalty, energy, and unity of the party which makes the members of the personnel seem like acquaintances of the reader before he has finished the book.

The resourcefulness of the Soviet flyers, the confidence with which they handle their machines in the most trying conditions of temperature and atmosphere, the advance they have made in mechanical and engineering skill, and the sure judgment of the leader, Dr. Schmidt, make the book a startling revelation to people unfamiliar with the work of the Soviet in the North.

The last part is a series of extracts from the diaries and reports of the four upon the ice floe and, except for the final exciting days before the rescue, the narrative has a certain monotony which contrasts with the other vivid parts of the volume. Nevertheless, this book is an effective portrayal of a new country strenuously in action.

Visitor to the Polar encampment. From "On Top of the World."

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Pressure for Purity

WE note the formation of The Council for Decency in Magazines, organized to combat obscene and offensive publications, with a list of officers from various religious denominations. Affiliated with the Council are several civic and religious groups, including the State Federation of Women's Clubs, the Knights of Columbus, the New York Urban League, the Society for the Suppression of Vice, and others.

On the face of it, this organization looks harmless. Unquestionably there are magazines published—some of the sex pulps, for instance—which are nothing but aphrodisiacs, and whose existence we could cheerfully see terminated, with no feeling that the freedom of the press was involved. However, legal machinery exists for the prosecution of obscene publications. There are already active societies in the field, and we question the need for another one.

According to the press report, one of the officers of the Council said that its work would be concerned largely with "border-line" cases. We take this to mean cases which are open to argument—publications which the Council considers objectionable, but which other enlightened citizens might consider harmless or actually beneficial to the public. Conceivably the birth-of-a-baby pictures in *Life* could come under this heading; so could a serious discussion of birth control or of the prevention of venereal disease.

The temptation of anti-vice organizations to step out of their field has been amply demonstrated in recent years by their attacks on books, from "Ulysses" to "God's Little Acre" and "A World I Never Made." For some reason, possibly the publicity value, anti-vice crusaders like nothing so much as a good row with the literary intelligentsia. The fact that the crusaders have lost all recent court fights on books which leading critics were willing to defend has not abated their zeal.

Public opinion, on which censorship in America ultimately depends, has been, and is currently, liberal and open-minded. But there are abundant signs that the public is just now struggling against a bad case of the jitters. Every new pressure group supplies fuel for the flames of any fanatic's intolerance. And it is just as well to remember that the machinery of moral censorship, if made too inclusive, might be used indirectly for political censorship.

This may be looking too far into the future as far as it concerns the Council for Decency. However, to the best of our knowledge, John S. Sumner is still active. And one John S. Sumner is enough.

John V. A. Weaver

"JOHNNY" WEAVER, who died last week in his early forties, represented the wholesome old American life of neighborly families and gawky and artless young people. When he first made his appearance on the literary scene, he was as rootedly American as Tom Sawyer or Penrod. John loved ordinary people, he sympathized with them, he committed to memory their lingo, their rich turns of phrase. Henry Mencken recognized immediately that Weaver's dialect poems were far from being the ordinary homespun; they preserved the American language, with all its colloquial nuances, in monologues and narratives that were absolutely authentic. John wasn't putting on a mask and doing a vaudeville turn, like so many dialect writers.

Of course it was Mencken's book on "The American Language" which started John arguing that good serious poetry could be written in it, which started John proving his point by writing it. His books of poems are a national heritage. He did plenty of other work too, novels, plays, motion picture stories. Several of his novels weren't bad at all, but his poetry was tops of its kind.

Certainly it was sentimental, with the sentimentality possessed by nine-tenths of the American population, by nine-tenths of the human race. Once in a while it gushed over that indescribable line that divides real sentiment from sentimentality. But not often.

John Weaver's death is a loss to our letters, just as Ring Lardner's was. Ring also knew how to write in American, and agreed that John knew how. Though Weaver could also write without dialect and do it very well.

The poet was a Southerner, born at Charlotte, North Carolina. He was named for his father, John Van Alstyn Weaver. He graduated from Hamilton College in New York State, studied after that at Harvard, went to Chicago and became assistant book editor on the *Chicago Daily News*. During the war he was a sergeant in the Ordnance Corps of the Army. He went back to the *News* in 1919 and then appeared in New York as literary editor of *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. He resigned after four years, to devote all his time to writing. In Hollywood he worked for several years, and one of his last jobs was the adaptation of "Tom Sawyer." Eventually, as it gets so many, Hollywood got him. But it didn't get him for good. He wrote one of the bitterest poems against its sham side that anyone could have written.

John's gone, and we're glad he lived to do his work and move among us with that mock-braggadocio and deep inner sympathy with plain ordinary people that he always had. He was a "breezy customer" and an honest man.

W. R. B.

Companion

BY TRISTRAM LIVINGSTONE

PEOPLE who live alone, they say, grow queer,
And tell mad stories to the rugs and chairs,
Or scold the table and the chandelier,
And trust old cupboards with their secret cares.

But every room still holds a little trace
Of those who were its occupants before—
You feel them shrinking in a narrow place
When you pass by; sometimes they try the door—

It well may be to them the lonely chatter.
There may, perhaps, be nothing odd at all
In those we overhear discuss grave matter
With candlesticks or portraits on the wall.

Neighbors will tell you that I live alone
With tables, books and chairs. They wonder why
And to whom I chatter in an undertone,
For they have never seen him, nor have I.

Yet he is more my friend than any man,
And will sit up to listen half the night,
While I recount how some old quarrel began—
And he is just, he knows I'm always right!

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Letters to the Editor: *Harold Sinclair on Lincoln's "Lost Speech"*

One of the scenes in Harold Sinclair's novel, "American Years" (reviewed in our issue of June 4) reconstructs the setting of Lincoln's famous "lost speech" at the first Republican Convention. In response to correspondents who have inquired as to the sources of this episode, Mr. Sinclair has written the following letter.

"Lincoln's Lost Speech"

SIR:—No man on earth knows—or has ever known—exactly what Lincoln said in Major Hall on the occasion of his "lost speech." Lincoln himself, only the next day, refused to transcribe his version of the speech for publication. Henry C. Whitney, who is mentioned in "American Years," and who wrote a book titled "Life on the Circuit with Lincoln," heard the speech and attempted to write a recreation of it from memory; but practically every man who had heard the speech, and who later read Whitney's version of it, disagreed with his version—Whitney's, that is. Sandburg, in "Lincoln: The Prairie Years," quotes more extensively from the "lost speech" than anyone else I have ever seen in print. But Sandburg's quotes are, I think (my own opinion, you understand), made up from the Whitney transcription and Sandburg's own poetic imagination. His quotes *could* be exactly what Lincoln said; I doubt that they are.

In "American Years" on page 343, Lincoln is reported as ending the speech with the words: "We won't go out of the Union, and you shall not!" The standard versions give it as "We won't go out of the Union, and you shan't." I made the alteration in wording solely because I thought my arrangement of words gave a stronger emphasis. A matter of opinion—and time.

Now this particular quotation is agreed upon by a number of people who heard the speech and who later talked about it and wrote about it. That is, they agree that these are the words Lincoln used. *But,* this quotation is generally supposed to be the climax of the speech, not necessarily the ending of it. For the purposes of "American Years," I made this quotation the end of the speech. Actually it might not have been; Lincoln might have talked for fifteen minutes after that remark. But, literally, no one *knows.*

As told in "American Years," the local paper did not carry an account of that particular Republican convention—in the daily issue, that is. It did, however, carry a story about it in the weekly issue. You understand how that was, I suppose. In those days, and in this part of the country, most daily papers also put out what was called a weekly edition, which went to an entirely different set of subscribers. The weekly edition carried a sort of résumé of the week's daily news, with the personals and odds and ends omitted—something like the weekly news magazines we have today. But this weekly edition did not carry Lincoln's own words. It merely mentioned the bald facts that the so-called Republicans had held a convention—in Lincoln's own words, "representing no one but themselves."

William Pitt Kellogg, afterward Civil War Governor of Louisiana and Senator from that state, described the 1856 convention very much as "American Years" depicts it. He also, in recollection, says that Lincoln made the climactic statement, "We won't go out of the Union, and you shan't." No doubt this later developed into the "house divided against itself" stand but Kellogg says that this theory, at least in its blunt actuality, came later, at Springfield, and that Lincoln did not labor the point in the speech in question. Kellogg too, you note, does not say that the quotation in question was the *end* of the speech.

J. K. Latimer, who was a delegate to the 1856 convention from Knox County, Illinois, agrees with Kellogg that "We won't go out of the Union, and you shan't," was the highlight of the talk. Latimer also says that the bulk of the speech (as Sandburg says) was about slavery and about Kansas slavery in particular.

To recapitulate a little: What Lincoln actually said, as I have explained above, is largely questionable. So much is known—again as I have explained. And where, and exactly how much, I have deviated from what is *known* I have explained. Once it was in my mind to attempt to recreate the lost speech in more or less of its entirety when I wrote this book—but that was a long time ago. When I actually wrote it I could not bring myself to do more than put in quotes the words we have been talking about: "WE won't go out of the Union, and you shall not." So much I was willing to risk; no more.

HAROLD SINCLAIR.

"She cost her father all his first editions, but she's worth it!"

Scotland Is Not Bohemia

SIR:—(1) In your June 11 issue, p. 12: ". . . Shakespeare's England (only in this case Shakespeare called it Bohemia) where

'Light thickens; and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood'"

(2) Macbeth (Act III, Scene 2):

Light thickens: and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood.

Isn't this carrying Bohemianism just a little too far?

M. LOUISE WYATT.

London, Ontario.

Liberty, Property, and Idioms

SIR:—In your review (*SRL,* 11 June, p. 18) the literary quality of "Price and Price Policy" is attributed to my "editing"—with "almost every page sprinkled over with" my "distinctive style." The compliment, much as I appreciate it, is not deserved. If the reviewer had looked a little closer he would have discovered that the styles of "the five collaborators" are as sharply defined as the patterns of the industries they recite. And the distinct marks of the crafts of Mark Adams, Albert Abrahamson, Helen Everett, George Marshall, and Irene Till are as much in evidence in their other published work as they are in this volume. Nor could one have remained captain to so spirited a crew without scrupulously observing the old Simian proverb, "It is safer to trespass upon a man's liberty or even his property than to tamper with his idiom."

WALTON HAMILTON.

Yale Law School
New Haven, Conn.

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New Platforms

NEW WRITING (SPRING 1938). Edited by John Lehmann. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1938. $2.75.

DIRECTION, SPECIAL ISSUE: AMERICAN STUFF. By Workers of Federal Writers' Project. Darien: Direction. 1938. 25 *cents.*

Reviewed by WILLIAM SLOANE

The contributions represent the most progressive literary and political movements of our time . . . they show the rise of a new social consciousness in England which is likely to produce a genuine literature in the near future.

The full promise of the Federal Writers' Project has not yet been envisioned; now it can but suggest a new life, a new age in American letters. Out of it may emerge a true people's literature.

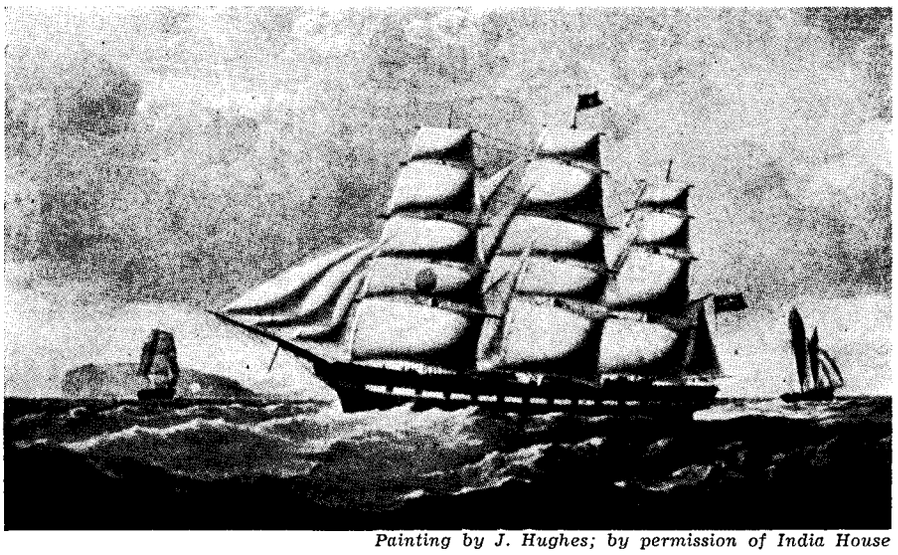
TWO such ringing statements as these (the upper taken from the jacket of "New Writing," the lower from the Introduction to "American Stuff" by the Editors of *Direction*) can be derived from but one source, that charter of liberty which beginning, or unpopular, writers are continually formulating. Its basic articles are familiar and may be found in the editorial platforms of many "little magazines" or in the manifestos of literary congresses on both sides of the Atlantic.

On our side of the water Mr. Harold Rosenberg develops the theme in his editorial, "Literature without Money": he declares that not only is literature "indivisible" but "the material mass of the literature-industry has responded to the intellectual pressure of independent publication only in the case of those forms which supply the commodity-demands of literary profit-enterprise." This formidable sentence appears to mean that commercial editors publish only the kind of thing they think their readers will read. Fortunately this is true. If it were not, the purchase of a magazine on the part of the ordinary reader would be merely an act of altruism.

Both "American Stuff" and "New Writing" suffer from a lack of clarity which may be owing to a confusion as to the nature of "literature." Each of them gave this reader, at least, a feeling that most of the contributors were aware of themselves as writing, but not of me as reading. The result was that only a small proportion of the total of fifty pieces, stories, and poems communicated their themes with any success. Miss Ruth Widen's "When the Bough Breaks," in "American Stuff," and Mikhail Zoschenko's acid satire of the Moscow housing crisis, seem to have been written with the possibility of a reader in mind. The inevitable result is that they are successful pieces, and Miss Widen in particular is likely some day to find herself trapped into supplying "the commodity demands of literary profit-enterprise."

The loneliness, the confusion, the search for valid thoughts and feelings which is so much a part of our time (and of youth at most times) is apparent in both these collections. Outside of Mr. Digges's "Bowhead Pete and the Mermaid" there is not much humor in the American volume. "New Writing" is equally serious, and much more full of echoes from the Spanish War and the conflict in China.

In technical competence the contributors to the foreign book are well in advance of their American contemporaries. C. Day Lewis, Christopher Isherwood, Paul Nizan, and Paul Hanley are represented by work which, if it is not their best, is at least well past the point of tentativeness. However, while it is technically interesting, it is not capable of evoking a powerful response.



Painting by J. Hughes; by permission of India House

". . . Learn what a passage was like in the after 'tween decks of a Black Ball liner" . . . (*Harvest Queen,* Black Ball line, 1854-1875; lost in collision off Irish coast, December 31, 1875. From "Square-Riggers on Schedule.")

Ancestors of the Ocean Liners

SQUARE-RIGGERS ON SCHEDULE. By Robert Greenhalgh Albion. Princeton University Press. 1938. $3.50.

Reviewed by ROLAND BARKER

FEW who traverse the Atlantic Ocean today realize that the stout packet ships—particularly the pioneers bearing the Black Ball and Red Star—were the direct progenitors of our colossal modern liners. A great deal has been written about the clipper ships and the latter days of sail in the Cape Horn trade. Professor Albion remarks in the introduction to this fascinating and authoritative book that the less romantic packets which initiated regular sailings between American and European ports in the first half of the nineteenth century have been slighted.

Impressive is the wealth of information and anecdote concerning the packet ship era which Professor Albion has reclaimed from the musty archives of the past. Obviously the result of exhaustive and systematic study, the work reveals in enlightening detail a renaissance in the maritime activities of America and Britain between 1815 and 1850. Those who cross the ocean today amid a hotel-like atmosphere would do well to read "Square-Riggers on Schedule" and learn what a passage was like in an eight foot square cabin in the after 'tween decks of a Black Ball liner—fare, thirty guineas, wines included. "The damp, clammy feeling of everything you touch. . . . Lack of room, the need for economizing in the use of water. . . . Seats and beds as hard as boards. . . . Rattling and stamping and clattering overhead when the sails are shifted at night."

This is also a significant account of a world awakening to the need for progress and speed. Conditions, motives, and financial problems that ended with those old American shipowners and captains are in this book. And at last, to the joy of this reviewer for one, the comments on packet ship crews made Gospel by quarter-deck authors such as Captain Samuels and the late Captain Arthur H. Clark show up for the biased estimates they are. "It is not fair that the atmosphere of brutality that hangs over these later years should spread to the whole packet era."

Come, all you readers who go to sea under the square-canvas now consigned to print and paper, and cross the Western Ocean in this very shipshape book. It will find a berth alongside Morison's "Maritime History of Massachusetts" and Lubbock's "Last of the Windjammers." At the back of the volume, there is extra stowage —a set of brief biographies of more than three hundred packet ship captains, together with concise records of ships, lists of foremast hands, casualties, and cargoes which excel anything of the kind I have pored over in many a graveyard watch.

Roland Barker is the author of "The Log of a Limejuicer: the Experiences under Sail of James T. Barker as Told to Roland Barker."

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FROM COAST TO COAST

HERE ARE TYPICAL REVIEWS

"Mr. Barrett writes with the flair of a novelist for character and situation, but he writes also with the conscience of a historian and the archival patience of a specialist."
—The Saturday Review of Literature

"Written as history should be written . . . virtue and fault both are given . . . and whatever their faults, Lopez and Eliza were remarkable persons."
—Dallas Herald

"Luridly melodramatic, it is also true. It holds the attention and makes the hair stand on end. Imagination . . . a sense of character . . . and a style so good one forgets it exists."
—New York Times

"This is the most exciting book it has ever been my pleasure to read . . . one of the most interesting books ever written."
—Chicago Journal of Commerce

"Two amazing characters have found a worthy biographer at last. The colorful Paraguayan dictator and his Irish mistress sweep through blazing adventure."
—Kansas City Journal-Post

"The belief that fiction rarely approximates the drama of real life is strengthened by this biography of two people who shared some of the most remarkable experiences in history."
—Buffalo News

"Thrilling, fascinating, tragic . . . a chapter of history most of us have never heard about."
—Omaha World-Herald

"A thrilling life of two people who have no parallel in history . . . an engrossing story.
—Rocky Mountain News

"There is no story to parallel it. Terrifying, pathetic, engrossing, *Woman on Horseback* deserves wide reading."
—New York Herald Tribune

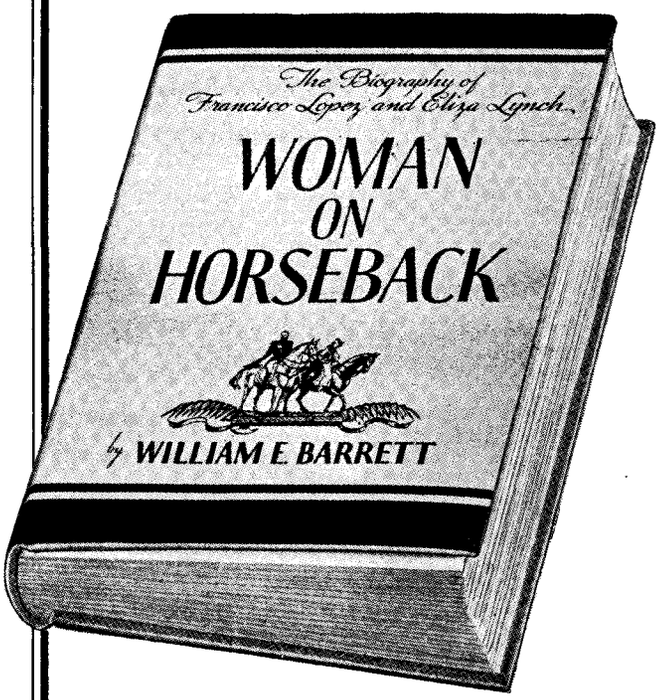
"A forever stimulating story . . . there is nothing in all history with which it can be compared."
—New Haven Journal-Courier

"Packed with enough excitement and drama to satisfy Hollywood's most lurid scenarists, yet amply fortified with documentary evidence of its authenticity. One of the year's most readable biographies."
—St. Louis Globe-Democrat

"A narrative so lively, romantic and full of action that it might be taken for a novel."
—Los Angeles Times

"Exciting and almost unbelievable, this extraordinary tale is fully documented."
—Pittsburgh Post Gazette

53 REVIEWERS RECOMMEND—



AND HERE IS THE CONSENSUS

THIS remarkable biography of a dictator and his mistress (Lopez of Paraguay and Eliza Lynch) stands alone among the books of this season for its unanimously enthusiastic press. Reviewers all over the country agree it is (1) as fascinating and thrilling as a novel, at the same time retaining the integrity demanded by strict historians; (2) has no parallel in history; (3) would make an excellent moving picture; (4) would be almost unbelievable were it not for its assiduous but never intruding documentation. It is the ideal book for summer. Take it along on your vacation to beguile your hours . . . to present to your hostess . . . to occupy your guests when inclement weather keeps them indoors and bridge games pall.

WOMAN ON HORSEBACK

$3 · *At All Bookstores* · **STOKES**

By WILLIAM E. BARRETT

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Is Relief Here to Stay?

(Continued from page 4)

Relief Administrations. It was only after this stage that the Federal Government was drawn into the relief program on a large scale. The Bourbons were still objecting. Mr. Hopkins's story of this early period is a priceless record. He tells, for example, how Governor Pinchot of Pennsylvania had been told by some administration followers that in seeking Federal aid he was disgracing the State; that the very self-respect of the individual States was at stake.

By the time the Federal Emergency Relief Administration was actually created and given its great powers and appropriation, the unemployed in the country had reached incredible figures, ranging between ten and fourteen millions of workers responsible for the support of nearly a third of the population of the United States. What sort of job would this enormous bureaucracy, created over night, perform? The task itself grew to dimensions never anticipated in the beginning. Thus for month after month between December, 1934, and April, 1935, there were over twenty million persons, nearly one-sixth of the population, on relief at a time. But these were not the same twenty million. Some went off the lists and others came on so that by conservative estimate not less than two-fifths of all the men, women, and children of this country were on relief, entirely or in part, at some time within the two and one-half years following June, 1933. It has been estimated by Stuart Rice of the Bureau of Census that in the five-year period beginning in 1933, a total of over nineteen billion dollars of public money was expended in various ways to keep those in economic distress in food, shelter, and some form of occupation. Look at it another way: it is calculated in one of the many superb statistical studies, issued by the W.P.A. ("Trends in Relief Expenditures," by Anne Geddes) that the per capita expenditure for all forms of relief in the State of New York had gone up from ten cents per inhabitant in 1910 to $16.51 in 1934.

But the most remarkable thing about this relief program was the incredible speed, efficiency, professional and technical soundness, and human understanding with which it was inaugurated and conducted throughout its duration. With probably negligible exceptions, the clean, honest, competent, friendly, and generous relief administration directed by Mrs. Armstrong was typical of the whole Federal Relief Administration. Whatever may be thought about other phases of the Roosevelt Administration, in particular the management of the W.P.A. and the charges of patronage and politics, the record of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration will stand as one of the best examples of organization and administration; one of those achievements in that American efficiency of which we like to boast, and with which not even the legendary perfection of the draft or liberty loan sales of wartime can compare.

To the reality and tragedy of the poor, whether taken as a mass or man by man, it is difficult to open the heart and mind of the general public. Clinch Calkins tried it in "Some Folks Won't Work," Helen Hall and her associates tried it in "Case Studies of Unemployment," published in 1930 and '31. Mrs. Armstrong tries again. She struggles to understand the public resistance to the only means of relief that seemed to give promise when the new poor had cut across social and economic lines. The author, herself, modestly admits that "but for the grace of God" she and her husband might also have been among those needing assistance. The caste lines, therefore, could not have accounted for what one of her clients described as "grouchy-heartedness." Stupidity evidently had its part. The very business men who benefited most from the activities of the relief administration, which had become the biggest spender, "the biggest business in town," would with one breath wail about the burden on the taxpayer, and with the next, fight madly against the discontinuance of funds which would reduce their current business to a dangerous margin. They were saved riots, avoided unspeakable destitution among their midst, were able to carry on business and make profits, and yet fought it with rare fury. Mrs. Armstrong decides at last that it was government supervision that these local politicians and business men were fighting. "Apparently," she says, "they wanted a blank check handed over to them to spend as they saw fit, and not only that, but they wanted the money spent by their own friends, relatives, and political henchmen, even if it cost twice as much to spend it this way." The evil breath of Cerberus at the pork barrel seems to separate the givers from those in need.

To the average citizen, the most important question probably is—when will all this be over? When can we get rid of the whole relief business? The public is apt to take on its face value the statement of the administration that the Government ought to and will "end this relief business." Nothing is farther from the probabilities. We can call it by other names and perform bookkeeping acrobatics, but the fact remains that we are now providing and must look forward to the future necessity of providing for the support of a tenth or more of the population from public funds for years beyond present possibility of estimate. Such a task will cost nearer three than two billion dollars annually to the taxpayer. It will have to be supervised, if not administered, by Federal authorities if the unfortunate citizens affected are not to turn into a sort of outmoded pauper class.

The basis of this future system will rest on the Social Security program, through which will be provided unemployment insurance, aid to the blind, and pensions and insurance to the aged. This will be supplemented by a public relief system conducted by the States and their constituent local divisions with some assistance and with supervision by the Federal Government. The disgraceful situation in Cleveland and Chicago in recent weeks, the periodic recurrence of the fear of similar cessation of relief in New York City, the great sectional divergence in standards of assistance, the outmoded sys-

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tem of financing this relief by special and sales taxes, will have to settle down to routine activities and may have to be supplemented by Federal grants-in-aid and supervised by a Federal Department of Welfare. Public employment on a wide variety of projects, such as we have become acquainted with in W.P.A. and P.W.A., are bound to continue and will probably shake down into a permanently organized, nationwide system of supplementary employment, under public auspices and for the public good, to fill the gap between real employment and relief, and to provide public benefits from the waste labor of the unemployed. It is quite likely that in the future as in the past this system of public employment will cover as wide a range as does the W.P.A. today (see "Unemployment and Its Treatment in the United States," by Dorothy Kahn; American Association of Social Workers); private philanthropy will be a negligible quantity, even as it is now, and will retain importance only to the extent that it helps, promotes, and encourages this vast structure of diversified public assistance. Despite the resistance of rugged individualism, despite our empty belief that this country is always open to the self-dependence of the pioneer, despite the fact that politics will always retain its unsavory features of hog-trough squabbling, despite the tremendous pressure by concentrated industrial and financial power to reduce taxes, and despite the conflict between the ideals of professionalized social work with its promotion of the Civil Service standards and the spoils system of political machines, there is every indication that in the end we shall inevitably recognize that "We too," who are helped by tax funds to keep body and soul together, "are the people," and that what has been discussed by Mrs. Armstrong as the county relief administration in northern Michigan, will, on the whole, be the model for a decent future system of relief administration.

Philip Klein is on the staff of the New York School of Social Work; he is the author of several books in social science including "The Burden of Unemployment," "Social Case Work" (jointly with Antoinette M. Cannon), and "Some Basic Statistics in Social Work" (with Ruth Voorhees). He is also a contributor to "The Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences."

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 221)

WILLA S. CATHER: "SONG OF THE LARK."

Some of them were beautifully decorated. Food, fire, water and something else—even here in this crack in the world, so far back in the night of the past. . . . Those potsherds were like fetters that bound one to a long chain of human endeavor.

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The New Books

Belles Lettres

CHARLES DICKENS: The Progress of a Radical. By T. A. Jackson. International Publishers. 1938. $2.25.

An interesting by-product of Marxian criticism has been the discovery of literary and doctrinal virtues in writers, such as Howells, whose reputations sank pretty low during the reaction against "Victorianism." T. A. Jackson now hears in Charles Dickens one of the most impassioned voices crying in the wilderness of nineteenth century capitalism. The bitterness and pessimism in Dickens's later novels reflect his utter disillusionment in bourgeois society; his tragedy was that he did not clearly see "the only possible alternative—faith in the proletariat and its revolutionary mission." Yet this "fine, large-hearted Radical" was always a champion of the proletariat, and drew as close to communism as one can without a knowledge of Marx.

There is certainly some truth in this thesis. There are also the familiar flimsy props: the "*real* drama" implicit in the later novels is unfortunately "somewhat obscured" by the melodrama and sentiment, and their author was "only partly conscious" of their "true purport." But Mr. Jackson weakens his thesis chiefly by working it too hard. He has to suppress a great deal when he makes an "impelling political passion" the key to the private as well as the professional life of Dickens; and since he apparently had an enthusiasm for the novels even before he discovered this key, his portrait of the artist as John the Baptist becomes a little ludicrous. He sees "master-touches" in the heaviest strokes of satire and caricature. It even turns out that Dickens drew men "in the flat" because so they actually were—"because the constitution of society had flattened them, past repair."

We suspect, in short, that this effort to render unto Dickens what is Marx's, will impress only the more naive worshipers of either.

H. J. M.

Biography

MY FATHER. By Paul D. Moody. Little, Brown. 1938. $1.75.

It would be impossible to write of Dwight L. Moody without maintaining a certain high level of interest. The astounding vitality of the man communicates itself even to those who touch him only on paper, and there emerges from pieces and books about him some of the gustiness that made masses and individuals intensely aware of his presence when he was chasing the devil all over America and England to boot. He had the force of a cataract, and both those who write of him as a spectacle and those who present him as a friend usually end up by just standing aside and watching him sweep past.

To other books about Moody is now fortunately added the impressions of his son, Paul D. Moody, president of Middlebury College. This book, an intimate portrait, has the strength and limitations which must inhere in a work that attempts both to recall and to appraise. It lacks a certain dramatic quality and it fails to make the most of situations which in the hands of a writer not kin to the subject could have considerably more thrust and bring the reader to his feet in that fine astonishment which the elder Moody knew so well how to induce. There is, indeed, a sort of casualness about the whole portrait. And while this is to be explained no doubt by the author's restraint and conscious good taste, it is none the less to be regretted. When a man writes of Moody, he should turn himself loose.

The politeness of the book, though, is certainly its only defect. It holds interest, it presents an appealing father and son relationship, it chronicles details that would otherwise be lost and are beguiling besides. (Moody spoke with amazing rapidity, so much so that a noted English clergyman declared that he could pronounce Jerusalem in two syllables.) It shows all phases of the man—his home life and pet economies, his sly humor and business shrewdness—and does not leave him merely a forensic marvel. This is obviously to the good, but even after you have seen the man in house slippers, he does not appear to be less astounding than he was before the multitude.

C. W. F.

Fiction

A CHALLENGE TO CÆSAR. By Saul Saphire. Covici-Friede. 1938. $2.50.

An Israelitish G. A. Henty novel, with considerable lumps of undigested history in its interior. The Roman characters, with the exception of Flavius Clemens and his wife, who became converts to Jewry, are invariably brutal and not very intelligent conquerors. The Jewish characters, with the exception of the inevitable backbiter who plays pantaloon in Jewish popular tales, are equally incredible paragons of family affection and religio-racial devotion. Mr. Saphire apparently knows his business while dealing with Jewish thought and tradition, and the book owes whatever slight value it has to his handling of these matters. It has no value as a Roman historical picture, being starred with the most outrageous anachronisms, such as calling Titus "King of Rome" and having a Ro-

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man gentleman appear at a formal dinner wearing a sword, which he would about as soon think of doing as Lucius Beebe would of appearing for a similar occasion with a tommy-gun in his hand.

F. P.

RICH GIRL, POOR GIRL. By Faith Baldwin, Farrar & Rinehart. 1938. $2.

The publisher's blurb on the jacket of this book calls Faith Baldwin "the author who never lets you down," and that is definitely more truth than fiction. It probably explains one of the most consistent of popular successes. In "Rich Girl, Poor Girl" (which, as may easily be inferred from the title, is all about two girls after one man) Faith Baldwin gives her readers precisely what they want. She gives it wordily, but competently and pleasantly. Of course, the poor girl gets the struggling young doctor, but the rich girl turns out to have a heart of gold beneath her spoiled exterior, and all three of them together successfully buck their town's corrupt administration. The book is full of homely detail, and a touch of high life is thrown in for good measure. All in all, here is a fine couple of hours' relaxation for Mrs. Baldwin's particular host of readers.

L. A.

THE BLUE BED. By Glyn Jones. Dutton. 1938. $2.

The first story in this collection, "Born in the Ystrad Valley," brings sharply to mind what we know of the youth and education of D. H. Lawrence. Glyn Jones is another collier's son, born and raised on the very brink of a mine, member of a large family of toilers underground, who was miraculously whisked away to a university education. He took away with him deep rooted physical memories, of the veined earth, the pits, the colliers, the farms; and from these there grew this strong and sensuous power with words which is evident throughout these stories. Let it be added at once: a good half of them are disappointing, for a reason which is very soundly expressed by Jones early in the first autobiographical sketch. He is writing, with some bitterness, of his university training:

> I was one of their very nicest little doctored toms. a collier's son with the outlook of a French æsthete. My naturally sensuous and impressionable nature, when it was directed—to the high spots of English poetry and poetic prose—began to flourish. Daily it becomes clearer that my unlucky sensibility and my great love for grandeur and sensuousness and style in all things were bringing about in me a subtle, spiritual betrayal of my people.

Without taking this last phrase too seriously, it seems clear enough that certain of his stories are the fruits of that early enchantment with "poetic prose." "The Kiss," for instance, and "Porth-Y-Rhyd" are marred by an inflated mysticism, and even "Born in the Ystrad Valley," full of fine material, becomes verbose and arty in spots, and rises up off the earth it should be hugging. Yet there are such short and pithy sketches as "Wil

(*Continued on page* 21)

LAUGH?

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

BENNETT CERF of Random House notes this department's desire for more humorous books. "Like a mother rushing to the defence of its young," he cries, "I hasten to call your attention to two books that have been enthusiastically reviewed by your own sheet." He mentions *I Lost My Girlish Laughter,* by Jane Allen, and *Though Young* by Leighton Barret. ☞The *Girlish Laughter* Old Q. has not read, but *Though Young* he enjoyed heartily. ☞Another book, which though serious in theme and of real importance is written with its author's most engaging lightness of touch, is A. P. Herbert's *The Ayes Have It* (Doubleday). ☞Mr. Herbert tells the astonishing story of his election to Parliament as the junior member for Oxford University; how accidentally it came about; how he defied every tradition of prudence in rising to make his maiden speech, opposing Mr. Baldwin the Prime Minister, on his second day in the House. ☞Carried away by excitement and zeal he even went so far as to swear that the Bill he proposed (to amend the Divorce Laws) would be passed by that Parliament. ☞More astonishing still, it was; and that although it came to debate at a time when Britain was in throe with a constitutional crisis based on the British dislike of divorce. ☞Mr. Herbert traces the actual steps and procedures by which a bill becomes an Act of Parliament; he takes us through Readings, Committees, the Lords' Amendments and all phases of tradition, strategy, comedy, and fatigue. ☞This is truly a very remarkable book; it might be supposed of a limited interest but to the student of history and government it is of absorbing value; it will unquestionably be Required Reading in every college course in constitutional history. ☞"Call that a maiden speech?" said Mr. Winston Churchill to Mr. Herbert after his opening outburst—"it was a brazen hussy of a speech." ☞And it is amusing to remember that this historic legislation on divorce was pushed through by a happily married man, one of the editors of *Punch,* who was at the same time writing and rehearsing a musical comedy for the stage.

☞Good news for detective story readers: Harcourt, Brace will publish in July three "combination-volumes" each containing two of Dorothy Sayers's mystery novels. These 3 dual volumes, at $2 each, will bring back in print three of Miss Sayers's titles that have been unobtainable for some years, viz. *The Dawson Pedigree, Clouds of Witness,* and *Lord Peter Views the Body.* ☞Norman Dodge's *The Month at Goodspeed's* for June is particularly pleasant reading; among other interesting items Goodspeed's offers a copy of Lafcadio Hearn's *Stray Leaves from Strange Literature* with one of Hearn's rare inscriptions—"written in the purple ink Hearn liked to use and we know that Hearn's nose almost brushed the paper as he wrote, because he had to write that way." ☞Mr. Dodge says Hearn "used to wear a kind of railroad conductor's cap pulled down over his eagle nose to hide his dead-eye, and his pea-jacket and low collar, with black string tie, were much too large for him." ☞Edward Laroque Tinker described Hearn as "a miniature but serious-minded scarecrow."

☞During the two months (July and August) when Goodspeed's monthly pamphlet takes vacation we seriously miss it; we should hope that Mr. Dodge might spend his summer in compiling a modern version of Disraeli's *Curiosities of Literature.* ☞Another unusual book is *A Lincoln and Whitman Miscellany* by Carl Sandburg, some rambling and heart-warming penserosoes about Abe and Walt, with fine reproductions of unique Lincoln material from Oliver Barrett's collection. This handsome little de luxe (only 250 copies) is the work of the Holiday Press, a group of 28 members of the staff of the famous Donnelley printing house in Chicago. They have prepared the book con amore in their spare time to show (as they put it) "that their vocation can also be their avocation." ☞We enjoyed Mr. A. Van Duym's lively piece in a recent *Publishers' Weekly,* "The Folklore of Bookselling." ☞He gives the run-of-the-shelves bookseller a few good pokes but he also admits that though book businesses may fail, few booksellers quit their profession. ☞He adds: "If you ask ten fairly intelligent human beings who are middle-aged what they would like to do for the rest of their lives, at least two of them would answer that they would like to go into the book business." ☞Old Q. enjoyed the comment made by the wife of a friend of ours lately. When she heard that her husband was going to start a secondhand bookshop (after having been in an entirely different trade all his life) she said "It'll be the best thing that ever happened. Now you'll stop buying books."

☞The American branch of the O. U. P. seems to have been chaffed by someone for a supposed Oxford accent. "As a matter of fact," they exclaim in their latest bulletin, "there is one genuine Englishman to nearly 100 Americans in the New York office." ☞We can't help wondering what that lonely toff may have thought of the Robert Taylor movie, *A Yank at Oxford.* ☞University Place Book Shop, 59 Fifth Ave., offers for $15 three bound volumes of *The Woman's World,* London, 1888-90, an illustrated magazine then edited by Oscar Wilde. We imagine its engravings of fashions, interiors &c would provide many a grin for the retrospective student of modes. ☞C. P. Everitt, always ingenious, offers a Dental Broadside, advertisement of a "surgeon dentist" of Chelsea, Vt., circa 1850, as "ideal for framing in your office, Mr. Dentist." 28 lines of curious text, 13 x 16 inches, $10.

☞In Los Angeles, Hollander & Davidson (Fine Books) and Edward Albertson (Rare Books) have combined to form Hollander, Davidson & Albertson, and now sell Fine *and* Rare Books. They are at 614 West 6th Street and have a printing press of their own.

☞As a boy (says Columbia University Press) Blaise Pascal was forbidden by his father to study geometry, for fear that the child would neglect his other studies. All the boy knew was that geometry was the science of exact figures and their relations to each other. ☞To his father's astonishment Blaise, by the age of 12, had worked out for himself the principal theorems and demonstrations of Euclidean geometry. The anecdote is narrated in full in *The Physical Treatises of Pascal,* translated by I. H. B. and A. G. H. Spiers, with introduction and notes by Frederick Barry. (Columbia Univ. Press.)

☞Add prize-winners: Phyllis Crawford of New York City has been awarded the $3,000 given annually by The Julia Ellsworth Ford Foundation for the best book MS. for children. Miss Crawford, formerly an editor with the H. W. Wilson Co., later worked for the Federal Art Project. Her book, *Hello, The Boat!,* an Ohio River story, will be published in October by Holt.

Personal

☞Farrar & Rinehart ran a personal ad in the *SRL* of March 19, to get an author for a book entitled *How to Live in an Apartment.* Sumner Putnam, F & R's adv. mgr., informs us that out of thirty-seven applicants, they have picked Dorothy MacLennan, an American now married to a Canadian and living in Montreal. "She has had considerable experience in American advertising and publicity work," writes Sumner, "and has done quite a bit of writing on her own. She has lived in apartments in New York, Chicago, Montreal and London, and has had plenty of experience finding the right apartment for the right budget." The Q. Associates are glad that the *SRL* was instrumental in bringing the happy publishers and author together, and we wish all success to the book.

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The New Books

(*Continued from page* 19)

Thomas" and "Eben Isaac," gnarled little studies that are as good as they can be. This is a book of mixed excellence; it presents in its entirety the intimate and unabashed spectacle of a talent in the making.

N. L. R.

DEATH IS SO FAIR. By Louis Lynch D'Alton. Doubleday, Doran. 1938. $2.

The period from Easter Monday of 1916 in Ireland through the Black-and-Tan terror to the creation of the Irish Free State is apparently to become one of the standard periods for Irish fiction. In this brittle novel, full of treachery, melodrama, and bloodshed, an idealist and a cynic live through part of this period. As is usual in modern novels, the cynic loses out, trapped by a girl, his conscience, and circumstance. Events are sometimes graphically told, but the novel is not convincing and the characters are types. In sum, repetition of pattern seems to be the fate of books dealing with this particular episode.

H. M. J.

Miscellaneous

THE FEDERALIST. From the Original Text of Hamilton, Jay, and Madison. Sesquicentennial Edition. With an Introduction by Edward Mead Earle. Washington: National Home Library Foundation. 1938. *Cloth, 75 cents; paper, 50 cents.*

This, which is in all probability the cheapest edition of "The Federalist" ever published, is also the most attractive and generally usable. Professor Earle has done his work as editor admirably. He has provided a careful bibliographical note, incisive biographical sketches of the three authors, and above all, an excellent general introduction. As he points out, "The Federalist" was much more than the classic contemporaneous exposition and defense of the Constitution. "It was the first and continues to be the most important discussion of Federal Government, for which the Constitution of the United States set a significant precedent. It was and still is a masterly analysis and interpretation of the Constitution and of the fundamental principles upon which the government of the United States was established. . . . It is also a work of first-rank importance in the history of political philosophy, and in particular, in the theory of representative government." He notes that as early as 1792 it was first published in a French translation. Into the vexatious question of the authorship of certain disputed essays in "The Federalist" Mr. Earle wisely refrains from entering. But he presents an extremely shrewd analysis of the book as a whole, bringing out its errors and limitations as well as its abundant virtues. This wise estimate of "The Federalist" after a century and a half might well be read by every American interested in the history of the country.

The edition, handsomely printed on a good quality of paper, well bound, of convenient size, and equipped with the full text of the Constitution and the careful index long ago made by Philip R. Fendall, represents a distinct achievement by the National Home Library Foundation. It deserves to be circulated in hundreds of thousands of copies.

A. N.

THE STORY OF SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY. By Charles A. Ellwood. Prentice-Hall. 1938. $3.50.

In this book one of the elder statesmen of American sociology traces the development of social thought from Plato to William Graham Sumner and Lester F. Ward. The decision to conclude at this point, with the apology that it is difficult if not unsafe to evaluate the work of living writers in the field, must be considered a major misfortune, especially since it results in the exclusion of most of the outstanding contributors to more recent sociological theory. With this reservation, however, the book serves its purpose adequately if not well. The author intended to produce an elementary introduction to social philosophy in its historical aspects, and his achievement is a successful primer, with primer-size type and a minimum of footnotes. Written without the rhetorical brilliance of Will Durant, whose "Story of Philosophy" serves as one of the source materials, the book nevertheless runs along smoothly, and will easily capture the curiosity and interest of readers unfamiliar with the social, political, economic, and historical doctrines of an exhaustive list of social philosophers. Professor Ellwood includes pleasant biographical sketches of all of his subjects, resists the temptation of popularizers to lend them melodramatic color, and summarizes their contributions in a competent manner. Perusal of this instructive and well-written primer will

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R. B.

FIRST-CLASS PASSENGER. Edited by August Mencken. Knopf. 1938. $3.

In a succession of informal narratives depicting the experiences of voyagers from the middle of the fifteenth century to the outbreak of the World War, Mr. Mencken has presented a panoramic survey of the changing nature of passenger travel from the time when a Dominican theologian set sail from Venice in a galley bound for the Holy Land to the journey which Ed Howe of Kansas recorded in a letter from Australia in 1913. For some strange reason (perhaps a heretical strain runs in the blood of August Mencken as well as his brother Henry), he has chosen to arrange his excerpts from letters and journals in inverse chronological order, so that instead of following the advances and improvements in ocean travel as the small sailing vessel made way for the increasingly sumptuous steamship the reader beholds the luxury liner dwindling away into a frail cockleshell of a boat. His chronicles depict the everyday life of the well-to-do-passenger at sea.

A. L.

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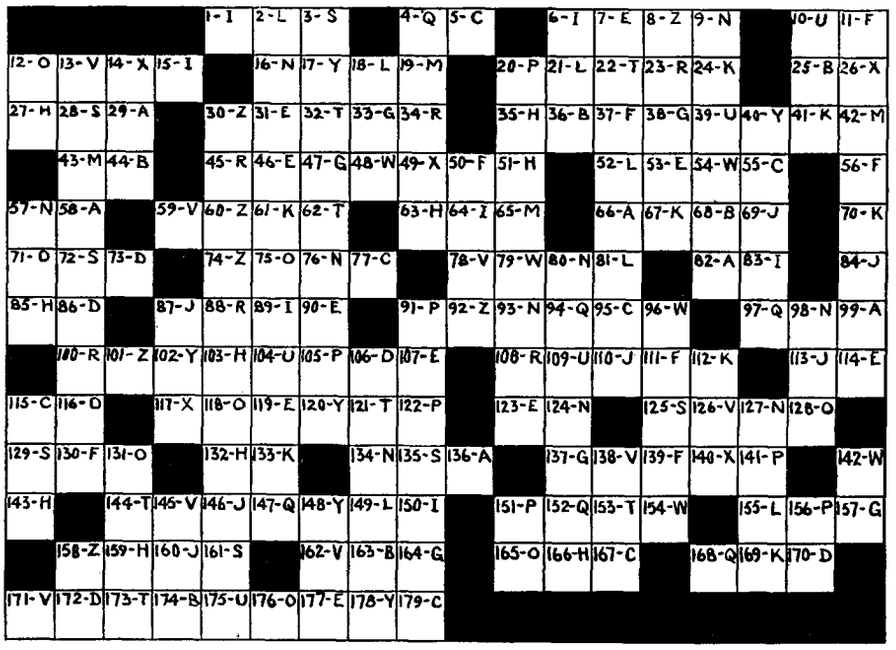

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 17 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Central character of Ibsen tragedy.

B. Exceed, leave behind.

C. Pressed together; compact.

D. French statesman (1560-1641).

E. Fervor.

F. Rotation about an axis.

G. Reptile of order Chelonia.

H. Son and successor of Saul.

I. Impalpable, unsubstantial.

J. No longer useful.

K. Present time.

L. Simpletons.

M. Earth goddess (Wagner).

N. One not inured to hardship.

O. Wagnerian hero.

P. Duplex; double.

Q. Boisterous laugh (comp.).

R. Make practicable or easy.

S. French composer (1892-).

T. Regulated; arranged.

U. *Allium cepa.*

V. One near another.

W. Forestlike; woody.

X. Scribe of the gods (Egypt. relig.).

Y. Keenness of mind.

Z. Compensate for.

WORDS

29 58 82 66 136 99

68 163 25 174 36 44

5 167 55 115 95 77 179

170 106 73 172 86

114 123 53 7 31 90 177 119 107 46

56 50 37 111 11 130 139

164 47 38 157 137 33

103 51 166 132 143 35 85 27 63 159

15 64 1 150 83 6 89

146 110 84 113 160 87 69

41 67 70 169 112 61 133 24

155 21 2 81 18 149 52

65 19 42 43

134 80 9 76 98 127 16 57 124 93

165 71 116 12 176 118 75 128 131

141 91 156 20 105 151 122

94 4 147 97 152 168

45 34 88 108 100 23

125 28 72 135 129 161 3

173 22 144 32 62 121 153

109 104 175 39 10

59 78 138 171 13 162 126 145

142 154 48 79 54 96

117 140 49 14 26

17 120 40 102 178 148

74 60 30 101 92 158 8

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